a field-activated magnetic switch, positioned adjacent to the attachment mechanism and arranged so that, when the first magnetic field is applied to the switch, the switch is in a first switch state, and when the second magnetic field is applied to the switch, the switch is in a second switch state, distinct from the first switch state; [and]

an electrical current source, connected to said field-activated magnetic switch at a first selected location, that provides a current through said switch, when said switch is in said first switch state;

an electrical current sensor, connected to the field-activated magnetic switch at a second selected location, that senses a first level of current when the switch is in the first switch state and senses a second level of current when the switch is in the second switch state; and

a switch sensor, connected to and sensing the state of the switch, that generates a selected alarm signal when the switch is not in the first switch state.

2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a signal transmitter, associated with said communications device, that transmits a selected signal when said field-activated magnetic switch is not in said first switch state.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein said second position of said attachment mechanism is selected from the group of positions consisting of: (i) rotation of said attachment mechanism about said attachment direction by at least a selected threshold angle, and (ii) translation of said attachment mechanism in said attachment direction by at least a selected threshold distance.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein said attachment mechanism at said first position provides a magnetic field, projected in a selected sensing direction, with a projected field magnitude that is at least equal to a selected magnitude threshold.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein said attachment mechanism at said first position provides a magnetic field, projected in said selected sensing direction, with a projected field magnitude that is less than said selected magnitude threshold.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein said magnetic field source is a permanent magnet having a selected magnetic field direction and including a magnetic material drawn from a group of materials consisting of aluminum-nickel-cobalt, iron-cobalt, iron-silicon, iron-samarium, permalloy and Mn-Zn ferrite.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein said magnetic field source is a permanent magnet having a selected direction that is oriented at a selected orientation angle relative to a selected switch direction associated with said switch, when said switch is in said first switch state.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein said field-activated magnetic switch is drawn from a group of switches consisting of a reed switch and a Hall effect switch.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein said field-activated magnetic switch has an activation direction for change of state of said switch, and at least one of said first magnetic field direction and said second magnetic field direction is chosen to be approximately perpendicular to a plane defined by said attachment direction and the switch activation direction.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein said attachment mechanism is drawn from a group consisting of a bolt, a screw and a friction-generating nail, and said attachment direction is chosen to be approximately a longitudinal direction of a shaft of the bolt, screw or nail.

*12 (amended). A method for detecting an unauthorized movement of a communications/meter device, the method comprising the steps of:

providing at least one device attachment mechanism, having a selected attachment direction, that attaches a communications/meter device to a selected attachment site;

providing a magnetic field source, associated with the attachment mechanism, that provides a first magnetic field with a first field direction and a second magnetic field with a second field direction when the attachment mechanism is in a first selected position and in a second selected position, respectively;

positioning a field-activated magnetic switch adjacent to the attachment mechanism and arranged so that, when the first magnetic field is applied to the switch, the switch is in a first switch state, and when the second magnetic field is applied to the switch, the switch is in a second switch state, distinct from the first switch state; [and]

connecting a switch sensor to the magnetic switch to sense the awitch state of the switch;

providing an electrical current source, connected to the field-activated magnetic switch at a first selected location, that provides a current through the switch, when the switch is in the first switch state;

providing an electrical current sensor, connected to the switch at a second selected location, that senses a first level of current when the switch is in the first switch state and senses a second level of current when the switch is in the second switch state; and

generating a selected alarm signal when the switch is not in the first switch state.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of transmitting said alarm signal when said field-activated magnetic switch is not in said first switch state.

14. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of selecting said second position of said attachment mechanism from the group of positions consisting of: (i) rotation of said attachment mechanism about said attachment direction by at least a selected threshold angle, and (ii) translation of said attachment mechanism in said attachment direction by at least a selected threshold distance.

15. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of selecting said magnetic field source to provide, at said field-activated magnetic switch, a magnetic field with a projected field magnitude that is at least equal to a selected magnitude threshold.

16. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of selecting said magnetic field source to provide, at said field-activated magnetic switch, a magnetic field with a projected field magnitude that is at least equal to a selected magnitude threshold.

18. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of selecting said magnetic field source to be a permanent magnet having a selected magnetic field direction and including a magnetic material drawn from a group of materials consisting of aluminum-nickel-cobalt, iron-cobalt, iron-silicon, iron-samarium, permalloy and Mn-Zn ferrite.

19. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of selecting said magnetic field source to be a permanent magnet having a selected direction that is oriented at a selected orientation angle relative to a selected switch direction

associated with said field-activated magnetic switch, when said switch is in said first switch state.

20. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of selecting said field-activated magnetic switch from a group of switches consisting of a reed switch and a Hall effect switch.

21. The method of claim 12, wherein said field-activated magnetic switch has an activation direction for change of state of said switch, further comprising the step of choosing at least one of said first magnetic field direction and said second magnetic field direction to be approximately perpendicular to a plane defined by said attachment direction and the switch activation direction.

22. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of selecting said attachment mechanism from a group consisting of a bolt, a screw and a friction-generating nail, and said attachment direction is chosen to be approximately a longitudinal direction of a shaft of the bolt, screw or nail.

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